



**King County**

**Ron Sims**  
King County Executive

**CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION**

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**King County Charter Review Commission**  
**Rural/Local Subcommittee**  
**Meeting Minutes – January 8, 2007**  
KC Chinook Bldg., 5:30pm-7:30pm

The meeting of the King County Charter Review Commission, Rural/Local Subcommittee was called to order at 5:35 p.m.

**Commission members in attendance:**

John Jensen  
Jim English  
John Groen  
Terry Lavender  
Gary Long  
Mike Lowry  
Allan Munro

**Staff :**

Corrie Watterson Bryant, Project Manager, Charter Review Commission  
Becky Spithill, Project Manager, Charter Review Commission

**Council and PAO Staff:**

Ross Baker, Chief of Staff, King County Council  
Mike Sinsky, Prosecuting Attorney's Office  
Rebecha Cusack, King County Council

### **1. Opening Remarks and Introductions**

Mr. Jensen welcomed everyone back from the holidays and just wanted to remind everyone again of the importance the work of the commission is doing in being able to give that outside-government view of how King County government should work.

Also, as a reminder, there is an additional meeting scheduled for January 23.

### **2. Open Space Amendment**

Terry Lavender gave a brief update on the amendment. The amendment will be coming back to the committee at the January 23 meeting. It also will be reviewed by the Conservation Futures Citizens' Advisory Committee tomorrow for unintended consequences, what criteria might put property on the list, etc. Their comments and thoughts will be included. The meeting is an open meeting and both Mr. Jensen and Ms. Watterson Bryant will be attending from the committee but anyone else is welcome to attend.

Ms. Lavender is still trying to get the map which seems to be a piece of information wanted by the committee.

### **3. Preamble Options**

Corrie Watterson Bryant presented 2 clauses for modifying preamble language.

- 1) protecting the county's rural lifestyle or way of life or communities.
  - Promote an economically and environmentally sustainable rural lifestyle
  - Promote a vibrant and sustainable rural lifestyle
  - Sustainable rural lifestyle and economy
  - Use of the word "Uphold?" instead of promote
  - Further county's dual role as both the local government for unincorporated areas and regional government for all the people.

#### Discussion:

Some discussion on the word "lifestyle". Gary Long suggested the words "preserve a healthy rural and urban environment and economy and secure the benefits of home rule.....". It seems the goal of the preamble is to show the county's role and responsibility but should be simple, short and to the point. Would still like to address the county's dual responsibility and role but that may be more of an implementation statement rather than in the preamble.

- 2) recognizing dual role of county government serving both unincorporated areas and local government and the region.

### **4. Intergovernmental and Reverse Contracting**

Mike Sinsky explained that this issue is about whether there is a charter impairment to county contracting with local governments or services or areas where there's annexation being proposed. There is not a specific provision in the charter that say the county can't do that but there are some case laws that calls it into question. Currently, there are 2 limits on the county's ability to contract out – a bargaining limitation and a portion that applies to tenured state employees which is based on a merit based system. The county has a merit based system in the charter which limits what can be contracted out according to this provision.

Mr. Sinsky presented language that's intended to address the interpretation of the county charter and to make clear that this isn't a charter limitation that's intended by county government. Mr. Sinsky presented 2 different versions of proposed language change. Is the context that the commission wants to deal with this limited to annexation or is it broader?

- First one is a broad statement that nothing in this section is intended to preclude the county from contracting with other entities where the county determines it's in its best interest. (broad allowance)
- The second statement is limited to contracts with other public entities where the county determines that it would facilitate annexation. (narrow context)

Some discussion ensued favoring the broader statement.

**MOTION:** Move to approve Section 510 Purpose, option 1 proposed language change.

Motion was seconded:

**Amendment:** insert the word "public" before "entities". Amendment seconded

**Discussion:** Mike Sinsky explained that inserting the word "*public*" limits the interpretation and the rest of the language could be read to mean that there was intention to place some limits on private contracts.

VOTE on amendment:            Approve: 1            Opposed: 5? (couldn't tell in the recording)

Amendment fails.

VOTE on original motion:    Approved: 6            Opposed: 0            Undecided: 1

Motion passes but will be left open for Mr. Munro to bring back specific information that may support his concern to further debate, if he chooses to, but he is in agreement to proceed with forwarding the issue to the full commission at the end of the month.

## **5. Deputy Executive of Rural Affairs**

Corrie Watterson Bryant provided brief comments on additional information from Mike Wilkins on the subject. Terry Lavender shared that in talking with Councilmember Phillips, he supports the title of Deputy Executive of Unincorporated Affairs because he feels it's important that the

unincorporated issues be attended to and that the rural issues are going to be better served in the long run once incorporations takes place. He also feels that over the next 10 years, during which he feels incorporations will largely occur, the charter won't be revisited during that time to make changes and that the title broadens the meaning.

Extensive discussion ensued on role, responsibility and authority of the position and how it would compare to David Spohr's position in the Ombudsman's Office. Also, discussed the definition of "rural" and "unincorporated".

Suggested placing the new position in the charter as a new section in Executive Branch after Section 330, titled – Deputy Executive of Rural Affairs that reads similar to the CAO – will be appointed by the executive and confirmed by the council.

Mr. Long would like to see language included that incorporates the following in the definition of the purpose of the position .....*To promote an economically environmentally sustainable rural lifestyle. Affirm the county's role as a local government for rural citizens.....*

There is a concern of being able to get both the legislative and executive sides to view the issues with equal importance and which would have the most political clout in making systemic changes in those subarea community plans.

Decision: Agreed to have Mike Zinsky wordsmith language to incorporate this position into the charter whether it can be melded with the preamble language or a stand alone amendment. Will discuss and take action at the next meeting.

- Preamble: Terry Lavender offered some language and presented it to the group:

*"We the people of King County, Washington, in order to form a more just and orderly government, establish separate legislative and executive branches, provide local and regional governance, insure responsibility and accountability....., preserve a healthy urban and rural environment and economy and....."*

Suggested to adding definition language to the deputy executive official position: *"to promote strategic plans and services for an economically and environmentally sustainable lifestyle."*

Agreed to look at whole proposed paragraph and language on the preamble at the next meeting. Will table the discussion on subarea planning.

**Next Meeting:**           **Wednesday, January 23, 2008**  
Meeting adjourned:   7:35 pm

Respectfully submitted by:   Charlotte Ohashi